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The hidden challenges inside church renovations

A case study at Prince of Peace Lutheran Church in Burnsville, Minnesota

Churches can't simply close down for renovations, especially ones that are well-attended and loved within the community. Instead, the renovations flex and mold around church activities. Services continue, children's ministry continues, and local outreach continues. They might temporarily relocate to a different part of the building, but they're still in full swing. Church renovations are not only about completing the project but minimizing the amount of disturbance to members and staff.

These same priorities surfaced in a project at [Prince of Peace](#) Lutheran Church in Burnsville, Minnesota. A large, multi-year renovation was underway and next on the list was the removal of several large block walls and additional selective demolition to make way for updated finishes. The selective demolition involved removing a staggering 20,000 square feet of ceilings and flooring within the child care and education centers.

Luckily, these centers are located on the lower wing level of Prince of Peace, away from the epicenter of the church. The sanctuary is the center of the action and where services are held, and that is located on the main floor. With this level of demolition though, the renovation project still had a chance of affecting the sanctuary in way of noise and vibration. To ensure minimal disturbance, Nick Holm, owner of [Twin Town Demolition](#), stepped in as the demolition contractor.

Get to know Twin Town Demolition

Holm has lived and breathed hard labor jobs since he can remember, starting his career straight out of school. His first job was working with his father, who was a general contractor. Holm assisted with various types of projects and gained valuable experience doing so, quickly building his skillset and proving his expertise. Soon after, Holm became interested in demolition jobs, which prompted a career move into the demolition industry. He was eager to learn the ins and outs, from sizing, estimating, and quoting, to project management and labor and construction management. It didn't take long for Holm to become intimately acquainted with the structure of processes needed to run a demolition business.

Continuous promotions and respect led Holm and his wife to a big leap of faith, putting everything they had into creating Twin Town Demolition. Needless to say, the twin city metro-based company was a success. Holm's diligence in collecting extensive data throughout each job allowed him to grow his business 30% more than his target goal in the first year. Now, Twin Town Demolition employs approximately 40 people. The same data he used in the beginning to set himself apart is still used today. Having this unique data helps the company work more efficiently and productively and contributes to making smart equipment purchasing decisions. If the numbers show that new equipment will improve productivity and save money in the long run, it's an investment they're willing to make.

The smart use of data also benefits Twin Town Demolition's customers in the form of competitive pricing. Holm can analyze the data to determine which type of equipment is most efficient to use, how

long it will take, and how much it will cost. This allows each new project estimate to be more accurate and minimize changes throughout the project. Up-front, transparent business is how you win over customers.

That example shows yet another reason why Twin Town continues to outperform its lofty targets. Putting people first is another reason. Holm and his wife still maintain that small-business atmosphere, even when growing exponentially. Employees' well-being and safety still top the list. Humility, continual learning, and teamwork are additional Twin Town Demolition values that contribute to long-term success. Asking questions is encouraged, and once you become the expert, so is sharing your knowledge with the team. The business is better when employees truly work as a team.

Project setbacks

Holm's team was aware of the difficulties that would arise from this project. The sheer nature of indoor demolition requires a different strategy, different equipment, and different priorities. Twin Town Demolition is no stranger to a challenge, and they don't shy away from it. Here are the three main challenges they worked through:

1. Dust, noise, and emission mitigation: Keeping these very normal aspects of demolition away from the active sanctuary, and the nearby library, was of top priority.
2. Recessed demolition area: Access to the project area required navigating several sets of stairs and sublevels. All equipment needed to fit through stairwells and tight hallways to reach the work zone.
3. Large vertical wall demolition: The sheer amount of demolition material that needed to be removed required a 12-person crew. When you work outdoors, cleanup can be largely handled with machinery, but that's not the case when the project is taking place inside a building.

Selecting the right equipment to rise above these difficulties was essential to complete the project in a timely manner. Regarding the wall demolition, Holm said, "Our standard production for hollow core non-load bearing block walls is about 40 sq-ft per labor hour, and with the Toro e-Dingo we achieved approximately 65 sq-ft per labor hour, which was considerably faster."

Comparing the [Toro® e-Dingo®](#) to traditional manual labor yields an even larger increase in production, at 55 percent. Perfect for indoor applications, the e-Dingo is powered by lithium-ion battery technology that emits zero engine exhaust emissions. It also allows operators the option of several power modes that help conserve energy and battery power. The e-Dingo is compatible with several existing Dingo attachments, allowing Twin Town Demolition to cut down on the amount of machinery used. It was a big player in the demolition process, but a switch in attachments meant it played a substantial part in material removal, too.

Prince of Peace renovation update

The education and childcare demolition by Twin Town Demolition ran right on schedule and the renovation project is set to be complete in October 2021. The goal to have a bright, safe, and engaging space for children to celebrate their faith is approaching rapidly. Holm, along with the entire Twin Town Demolition team, kicked off the project in an efficient manner, making way for the construction crews who followed. That's a job well done.

For more information on Twin Town Demolition, visit twintowndemolition.com. For more about Toro, visit toro.com.